

Ann Arbor, Michigan  
November 16, 1954

Professor Joshua Lederberg  
Department of Genetics  
University of Wisconsin  
Madison 6, Wisconsin

Dear Professor Lederberg:

Both Dr. Markert and I wish to express appreciation for the letter you wrote last spring in his behalf. We both feel that the letters received by the President were helpful in persuading the President to reinstate Markert in his position on the faculty. You will perhaps be interested in a brief summary of the events which resulted from Markert's refusal to answer questions of political belief and association before the sub-committee of the House Committee on un-American Activities (chaired by Rep. Clardy, R., of Michigan).

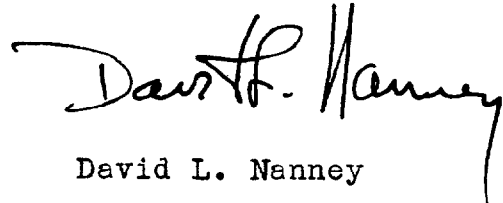
Immediately after the hearing Markert was suspended with pay and "without prejudice" by President Hatcher, pending a thorough investigation of the reasons for his refusal to answer many of the questions put to him by the Congressional committee. The suspension prompted his colleagues in the zoology department and his students to express strongly their support of his right to continue as a member of the faculty. The executive committee of the department recommended that he be reinstated. Next, the executive committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, after a hearing with Markert, recommended unanimously to the president that the suspension be lifted. A special committee of the University Senate was then appointed to conduct an extended hearing into the cases of Markert and two other faculty members who had also refused to cooperate with the Congressional committee. This special committee also recommended that Markert be reinstated in his university position.

Before all of these committees and his colleagues Markert spoke openly and with candor concerning his political beliefs and affiliations. He did not, of course, discuss nor identify other individuals nor did the University ask him to do so. The two most important facts which emerged from these discussions were 1) that Markert had fought for a year in the Spanish Civil War as a member of the International Brigades, and 2) that he had for several years thereafter been a member of the Communist Party. He left the Party because of the growing ascendancy of his interest in scientific work as opposed to political activity, and because he felt that the Communist Party had changed to the point where it was neither effective nor appropriate as an organization for implementing his political and social philosophy. / ?

In the face of Markert's own testimony and the strong support of his colleagues, both at Michigan and elsewhere, the President on August 27, lifted the suspension and restored him to his position on the faculty. The Regents of the University concurred in this action by a vote of 7 to 1. The University Senate met this fall and voted its approval of Markert's reinstatement.

In some ways the final judgment on this affair was perhaps given by the Michigan electorate on Nov. 2. Rep. Kit Clardy, Chairman of the sub-committee, and the motivating force behind the Congressional hearings, was defeated in his bid for reelection by a professor from Michigan State College.

Sincerely yours,

  
David L. Nanney

*We were happy to hear the  
outcome despite our reservations.*